



## SOUTHERN WASTE RESOURCE CO

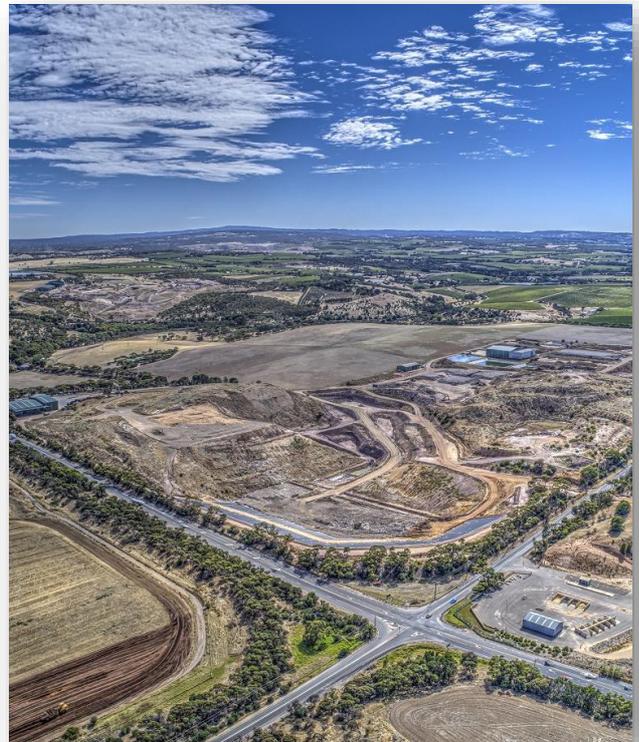
### Community update #3

Issued 15 February 2021

Southern Waste ResourceCo (SWR) has operated a landfill on Tatchilla Road at McLaren Vale since 1996. This landfill has development approval to operate and requires an EPA licence to authorise the types of wastes it can receive. In February 2020, SWR sought EPA approval to add an additional type of waste to its licence – waste containing per- and poly-fluoroalkyl substances (PFAS).

When not properly disposed of, PFAS are of concern in the environment because they don't break down and can persist for a long time. In addition they have been shown to bioaccumulate up food chains, with nearly all of us having some level of PFAS in our bloodstream due to their presence in our food.

Australian governments have been working collaboratively for several years to consistently and effectively identify and treat existing PFAS contamination in the environment, and a ban on fluorinated firefighting foams in South Australia came into effect on 30 January 2018.



## Listening and responding to community concerns

Many members of the southern community have expressed their concerns about this application. The EPA has undertaken an extended period of community engagement to enable residents to provide their comments and for the EPA to respond to requests for further information. Advertisements and media releases were issued, [FAQs](#) have been created, stakeholder briefings held, and community updates have been sent out to more than 4000 residents, with more than 200 people having had direct contact with the EPA over the phone, email or in person. A [community submissions report](#) has been published, and a [community information session](#) was held at the McLaren Vale & Fleurieu Coast Visitor Information Centre in July 2020.

**One of the most consistently repeated concerns raised by the community is whether there is potential for the landfill lining system to fail, and concerns about the impact this might have on the groundwater, vineyards, creeks and coast, if PFAS were to travel through the groundwater off-site. In response to these concerns, the EPA has engaged independent experts from Flinders University to review the potential for PFAS from the site to enter the surrounding environment.**

# SWR Licence renewal

At the expiration of an existing environmental licence, an application is made by the licensee for renewal. The EPA reviews the conditions of licence and then if necessary, develops updated draft conditions using the benchmark of the most recent modern licences and conditions. It commences discussion with the licensee to ensure expectations are understood, drafts legally enforceable conditions, and publishes the renewed licence to the EPA website.

The existing licence held by SWR is due for renewal on 1 April 2021, and is in the process of being routinely assessed by the EPA. SWR has existing development approval and authorisation to operate a waste facility at this site. In accordance with legislation and SWR's current environmental performance, the authorisation will be renewed on 1 April 2021.

**This routine licence renewal process is separate to the EPA's assessment of the application for the disposal of PFAS contaminated wastes, which is still ongoing.**

## Modernising licence conditions

From 1 April 2021 and in accordance with the *Environment Protection Act 1993* the EPA intends to make amendments to the SWR licence to include strengthened requirements relating to:

- community engagement
- litter management
- stockpile management
- cell closure, capping and revegetation

In addition, the EPA intends to improve the clarity of expectations for waste management and treatment at the site, and to impose a financial assurance requirement pursuant to section 51 of the EP Act.

For background information, copies of FAQs, previous community updates and reports, please visit the [EPA website](#) or contact us on the details below to request a copy to be posted out to you.

## Community engagement on the licence renewal

SWR's existing licence will be renewed on 1 April 2021. Given the interest from the community into the operations of this site, the EPA has required SWR to undertake community engagement during the licence renewal period.

If you would like to participate please contact SWR on:

**Email:**

[SWR\\_community@resourceco.com.au](mailto:SWR_community@resourceco.com.au)

**Phone: (08) 8406 0355**

This is an opportunity to talk with SWR about current operations and environmental performance at the site.

SWR has indicated it has a strong commitment to working with the local community, and we encourage you to take up this opportunity.

**The renewal is a separate process to the EPA's assessment of the application for the disposal of PFAS contaminated wastes, which is still ongoing.**

FURTHER INFO

For **further information** please contact the Environment Protection Authority

GPO Box 2607, Adelaide SA 5001

Telephone: (08) 8124 4216

Email: [engage.epa@sa.gov.au](mailto:engage.epa@sa.gov.au)

Website: [www.epa.sa.gov.au](http://www.epa.sa.gov.au) (follow the links to 'community' then 'stay informed')

*If you would like to be posted a copy of any of the items that are hyperlinked (blue underlined text), please contact us and we will send them to your postal address.*

